



World-Wide Forestry at Your Fingertips

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Never before has there been so much information at your fingertips as with the Internet. You can find information on virtually any topic that you choose. Today, over 500 million people have learned to use the "web" to their benefit. Just during November and December of 2001, Americans spent \$13.8 billion shopping online. There are more than 4.3 million domains (.com, .gov, .edu, .org, .us, etc.) and 300 million web pages, with 1.5 million pages being added daily! The vast information available on natural resources, including forestry, has never been more convenient.

Searching for your Interest

There are two ways to locate specific information of interest: First, by utilizing a **search engine**, such as Yahoo, AOL, or MSN; and second, by going to a **main web site** on your topic and following the links. Many main web site addresses (URLs) are found on advertisements in newspapers, magazines, radio, and television.

For example, a search on the word "Forestry" resulted in listings for several hundred web sites, commonly called "hits." The first six on the list were Encarta Forestry Facts, followed by the USDA Forest Service (www.fs.fed.us), www.forestry.about.com, www.forestind.com, www.arborists.com, and www-metla.fi/info/vlib/Forestry, a Finland website.

To narrow your search to Alabama-related sites, submit a search on "Forestry Alabama." This results in a more specific list for Alabama, with the top six hits as follows: Alabama Urban Forestry Association (www.aufa.com), Alabama Forestry Association (www.alaforestry.org), Alabama Forestry Commission (www.forestry.state.al.us), City of Huntsville Urban Forestry for Alabama (www.ci.huntsville.al.us/Landscape/Trees), Southern Urban Forestry Associates (www.sufa.com), and Alabama Cooperative Extension System (www.aces.edu). You'll find that some hits don't apply while others are exactly what you need. A search engine can quickly locate web

sites for specific topics if you select the appropriate keywords.

The second way to find information on the Internet is to go to a main web site for your topic and follow the links. Use this method if you are interested in learning more about a generalized topic, such as forestry, or if you not sure what keywords to use in a search engine. This is also useful if you are just "browsing" or "surfing" the web because you need something to pass the time. Some main web sites relating to forestry are listed in the accompanying table.

Alabama Government Sites

The sites listed under the general heading, "Alabama Government Sites" provide a significant amount of information specifically pertaining to Alabama forests. These six sites have links to most of the other sites listed in the table.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System lists many publications relating

(Continued on page 18)

World Wide Forestry at Your Fingertips

(Continued from page 17)

to forestry and wildlife management on their website. The Southern Region Extension Forestry site contains additional publications, including the latest "Southern Forest Resource Assessment" report. These sites also provide telephone numbers for county extension agents and specialists.

To obtain a list of environmental laws and actions, go to the Alabama Department of Environmental Management site. This site also has links to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) website, where you can find a multitude of information on environmental protection actions.

The Department of Conservation & Natural Resources website contains a list of state hunting and fishing laws, hunting season dates, and a variety of links to many wildlife management sites.

The Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) website contains information on the state's current fire situation and the latest fire weather forecast, as well as Southern Pine Beetle (SPB) infestation and control status. The site also includes links to purchase seedlings from the state nursery, articles from the Alabama's TREASURED Forest magazine, specific forest management articles, and the official forest industry listing for Alabama.

The Auburn Forestry Department site lists the various education programs offered at Auburn University, contacts for the professors and other specialists, and links to more forest management information. Several of these links include: The Silvicultural Herbicide Cooperative, the Longleaf Alliance, the Private Forest Management Team, and Professional Logger Manager course information.

Alabama Organizations and Associations

The next group of websites listed in the table includes "Alabama Organizations and Associations." The Alabama Forest Owners Association and Alabama

TREASURE Forest Association (ATFA) are the two main groups specifically representing private, non-industrial forest landowners in Alabama. Both of these websites contain information on meetings and tour schedules of interest to landowners, lists of speakers, and more forest management literature. The Alabama Forest Owners Association allows members to post land and timber sales as well as hunting leases. The TREASURE Forest Association provides information on how to form local landowner chapters and get other assistance.



The Alabama Forestry Association (AFA) represents forest industry as well as private, non-industrial landowners. Go to their website to learn more about the "Log a Load for Kids" program, Sustained Forestry Initiatives (SFI), current legislative issues, or to locate certified professional loggers in your area. They also partly sponsor the "Alabama Forests Forever" program, which is an interactive education curriculum on CD-ROM geared to grades K-12.

To read more on general forestry topics, visit the "Private Forest Management Team" website. This site contains extensive documentation on most forestry-related topics geared to the landowner with an excellent listing of other web resources. If you are interested in physically attending a forestry workshop, the PRECEDA Forestry Shortcourses website should be of interest.

The Alabama Wildlife Federation (AWF), like the Alabama Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, has many links to wildlife management websites of interest to the avid hunter or wildlife observer. There are also plenty of tips for enhanced wildlife management listed directly on their site. Also available for purchase on the site is *Managing Wildlife*, perhaps one of the best books published on wildlife management. The Alabama Waterfowl Association's website has valuable information on waterfowl habitat management, including information about the Alabama Wetlands Compensatory Mitigation program.

National Government Sites

The next group of websites listed in the table includes "National Government Sites." The USDA Forestry Service website has perhaps the most extensive amount of resource information relating to forestry. The Southeastern Region's site contains information more specific to our region.

If you need maps of your property, visit the US

Geological Survey (USGS) website. You can order aerial photographs, topographic maps, roadmaps, and many other mapping-related products from their website. They also have many links to private websites that re-sell USGS products, one of which is MicroSoft's TerraServer. TerraServer eventually will have aerial photograph/satellite images available for any location in the world.

Other Sites

The last group of websites listed in the table includes "Other Sites." This group contains nationwide, forestry-related associations, including the American Forest Foundation and American Forests. These two sites include information on Project Learning Tree, the Tree Farm System (which can also be found on the National Tree Farm System site), and the Global ReLeaf pro-

gram. The Forest Landowners Association is geared more towards the southeastern forest landowners.

If you need to find a consulting forester, check out the Association of Consulting Foresters and Society of American Foresters websites.

Go to the Certified Forest Products Council, Forest Stewards Council, and National Tree Farm System websites to learn more about the various forest certification programs that are becoming popular.

If you need to learn more about timber tax, visit the National Timber Tax website. Visit the Forest Landowners Tax Council website to learn what is being done to reduce your taxes. If you are planning a timber sale and need current stumpage prices, go to the Timber Mart-South website.

Several other websites that contain a wealth of forestry information include the Forest Directory, Forestry Images, Forestry Index, Forestry on About, Agriculture Network Information Center, and National Agroforestry Center websites. To learn how to build furniture or finish your woodworking project, visit the Wood Web.

Summary

Just like the Internet in general, the list of forestry-related websites seems endless. Not mentioned are many private and commercial websites targeted towards forest landowners. There are also sites available that list land and timber sales for forest landowners. Many forest industries use the web to buy and sell finished wood products. Landowners can even create their own forest management plans and maps of their property; purchase seedlings, forestry equipment, and aerial photos, or even sign up for hunting/fishing adventures.

Happy hunting, and when you reach the end of the Internet, please call to let me know! ☎

Source: "The Roads and Crossroads of Internet History," by Gregory R. Gromov.

Main Web Sites Relating to Forestry in Alabama

Alabama Government Sites:

Alabama Cooperative Extension System	www.aces.edu
Alabama Department of Environmental Management	www.adem.state.al.us
Alabama Department of Conservation & Natural Resources	www.dcnr.state.al.us
Alabama Forestry Commission	www.forestry.state.al.us
Auburn University School of Forestry	www.forestry.auburn.edu
Southern Region Extension Forestry	www.soforext.net

Alabama Organizations & Associations:

Alabama Forest Owners Association	www.alabamaforestowners.com
Alabama Forestry Association	www.alaforestry.org
Alabama Forests Forever Foundation	www.alaforestsforever.org
Alabama Treasure Forest Association	www.atfa.net
Alabama Urban Forestry Association	www.aufa.com
Alabama Waterfowl Association	www.alabamawaterfowl.org
Alabama Wildlife Federation	www.alawild.org
PRECEDA Forestry Shortcourses	www.preceda.com
Private Forest Management Team	www.pfmt.org

National Government Sites:

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	www.epa.gov
Natural Resource & Conservation Service (NRCS)	www.nrcs.usda.gov
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	www.fws.gov
U.S.D.A. Forest Service	www.fs.fed.us
U.S. Forest Service (Southeastern Region)	www.southernregion.fs.fed.us
U.S. Geological Survey (Maps & Photos)	www.usgs.gov
U.S. National Park Service	www.nps.gov

Other Sites:

Agriculture Network Information Center	www.agnic.org
American Forest Foundation	www.affoundation.org
American Forests	www.americanforests.org
Association of Consulting Foresters	www.acf-foresters.com
Certified Forest Products Council	www.certifiedwood.org
Forest Directory	www.forestdirectory.com
Forest Landowners Association	www.forestland.org
Forest Landowners Tax Council	www.fltc.org
Forest Stewards Council (US)	www.fscus.org
Forestry Images	www.forestryimages.org
Forestry Index	www.forestryindex.net
Forestry on the About Network	www.forestry.about.com
Herbicide Labels	www.greenbook.net
MicroSoft TerraServer (maps & photos)	www.terraserver.com
National Agroforestry Center	www.unl.edu/nac
National Arbor Day Foundation	www.arborday.org
National Timber Tax Website	www.timbertax.org
National Tree Farm System	www.treefarmssystem.org
Society of American Foresters	www.safnet.org
The Nature Conservancy	www.tnc.org
Timber Mart-South Sales Prices	www.timbermart-south.com
Wood Web	www.woodweb.com

Visit the AFC Web Site:
www.forestry.state.al.us